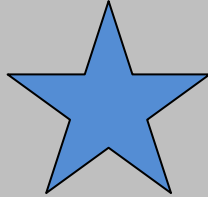


# Colorado Professional Teaching Standards



Colorado

## *Professional Teaching Standards*

Commission

"For every student in Colorado,

A knowledgeable, skilled, compassionate teacher...

A star in every classroom."

***Every public school student will graduate from high school, globally competitive for work and postsecondary education and prepared for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.***

In May 2010, the Colorado Legislature charged the State Council for Educator Effectiveness with developing recommendations to the State Board of Education for the components of a new educator evaluation system. These recommendations were to include quality standards which all teachers would be expected to meet. To this end, Council members who include teachers, administrators, a parent, a student, local school board members, and a charter school representative, considered what teachers need to know and be able to do in 21<sup>st</sup> century schools. This document contains the aligned teacher standards being proposed to the Colorado State Board of Education in April 2010. These teacher standards are also aligned to the proposed Principal Standards, so that principals will be evaluated based on their ability to support teachers in achieving what the teacher standards expect of individual teachers.

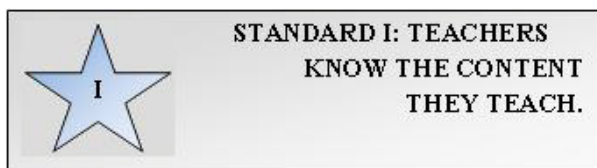
Why are these standards important to you? The Colorado Professional Teaching Standards should be the basis for teacher preparation, teacher evaluation and professional development. The State and local districts will be developing teacher evaluation systems and tools, and professional development will take on a new look as they are aligned to these Standards.

### **A NEW VISION OF TEACHING**

The different demands on 21<sup>st</sup> Century education dictate new roles for teachers in their classrooms and schools. The following defines what teachers need to know and do to be able to teach students in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:

- Leadership among the staff and with the administration is shared in order to bring consensus and common, shared ownership of the vision and purpose of the work of school. Teachers are valued as professionals for the contributions they make to their classroom and the school.
- Teachers make the content they teach engaging, relevant and meaningful to students' lives.

- Teachers can no longer simply cover material; they must work with students to uncover solutions. Teachers teach core content that is revised to include skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, and information and communications technology literacy.
- In their classrooms, teachers facilitate instruction that encourages all students to discover how to learn, innovate, collaborate and communicate their ideas.
- Post-Secondary and Workforce Readiness values and skills are included across content areas.
- Teachers take responsibility for engaging students and their parents/guardians as partners in education, providing meaningful opportunities for student voice and parent engagement in educational decisions.
- Teachers are reflective about their practice and include assessments that are authentic and structured to demonstrate student learning.
- Teachers demonstrate the value of lifelong learning and encourage their students to learn and grow.
- All teachers take responsibility for the academic growth of their students, and use data and other information about student achievement and growth to change and, where necessary, improve their practice.



***Teachers align their instruction with the Colorado State Standards and their district's curriculum.***

Teachers use state and district content standards to organize instruction. Where appropriate, and in order to enhance the state standards, teachers investigate the content standards developed by professional organizations in their specialty area. They develop and apply strategies to make the curriculum rigorous and relevant for all students, and to provide a balanced curriculum which incorporates literacy and numeracy across all content areas. Elementary teachers have explicit and thorough preparation in literacy and numeracy instruction. Middle and high school teachers incorporate literacy instruction within the content areas or discipline.

***Teachers know the content, and understand the central concepts, tools of enquiry, and structures appropriate to their teaching specialty.***

Teachers bring a richness and depth of understanding to their classrooms by knowing subjects beyond the content they are expected to teach and by directing students' natural curiosity

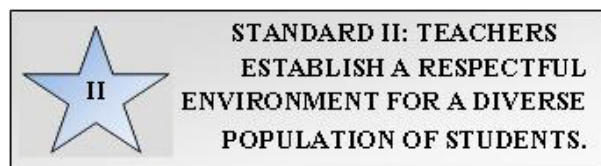
into an interest in learning. Elementary teachers have broad knowledge across disciplines. All teachers are able to assist students in the development of critical thinking and reasoning skills, and in the discernment and evaluation of information.

***Teachers recognize the interconnectedness of content areas/disciplines.***

Teachers know the links and vertical alignment of the grade or subject they teach and the state standards. Teachers understand how the content they teach relates to other disciplines in order to deepen understanding and connect learning for students. Teachers promote global awareness and its relevance to subjects they teach.

***Teachers make instruction relevant to students.***

Teachers incorporate 21<sup>st</sup> century and post-secondary workforce readiness skills into their teaching deliberately, strategically and broadly. These skills include leadership, ethics, accountability, adaptability, personal productivity, personal responsibility, people skills, self-direction, social responsibility, critical thinking and reasoning skills, and the ability to discern and evaluate information.



***Teachers provide an environment in which each child has a positive, nurturing relationship with caring adults.***

Teachers encourage an environment that is inviting, respectful, supportive, inclusive and flexible, and which facilitates maximum student focus on learning.

***Teachers embrace diversity in the school community and in the world.***

Teachers demonstrate their knowledge of the history of diverse cultures and their role in shaping global issues. They draw on diverse cultural competencies to design and implement lessons that counteract stereotypes and incorporate the histories and contributions of all cultures. Teachers recognize the influence of race, ethnicity, gender, religion and other aspects of culture on a student's development and personality and respond to the relevant backgrounds of individual students. Teachers incorporate different points of view in their instruction.

***Teachers treat students as individuals.***

Teachers maintain high expectations, including graduation from high school, for students of all backgrounds. Teachers appreciate the differences and value the contributions of each student in the learning environment by building positive, appropriate relationships, creating opportunities for student voice, and fostering an environment that promotes mutual respect.

***Teachers adapt their teaching for the benefit of students with special needs across a range of ability levels.***

Teachers understand the diversity of student ability levels and strive to meet the needs of each student. Teachers collaborate with a range of support specialists to develop and use appropriate strategies and resources to adapt to the learning needs of both groups of students including those with special needs, English language learners, and gifted and talented learners, as well as individual learners. Through inclusion and other models of effective practice, teachers engage students to ensure that their needs are met.

***Teachers work collaboratively with the families and significant adults in the lives of their students.***

Teachers recognize that educating children is a shared responsibility involving the school, parents or guardians, and the community. Teachers develop and improve upon communication and collaboration processes between the school and families in order to promote trust and understanding and empower parents or guardians to play a meaningful role in the academic growth of their children. Teachers develop processes to build stakeholder partnerships within the community to enable maximum utilization of community resources. Teachers seek solutions to overcome cultural and economic obstacles that may stand in the way of effective family and community involvement in the education of their students.



***Teachers know the ways in which learning takes place, and they know the appropriate levels of intellectual, physical, social and emotional development of their students.***

Teachers understand how children develop and how development influences how children learn, and they design and implement developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences. Teachers understand the influences that affect individual student learning (development, culture, language proficiency, etc.) and differentiate their instruction accordingly. Teachers keep abreast of evolving research about

student learning and pedagogy. They adapt resources to address the strengths and weaknesses of their students.

***Teachers plan instruction appropriate for their students.***

Teachers collaborate with their colleagues and use a variety of data sources to guide short- and long-term planning based on state content standards. These plans reflect an understanding of how students learn, and use appropriate resources and strategies to adapt to the learning needs of groups and individual students. [Teachers engage students in the learning process] by making the curriculum responsive to cultural differences and individual learning needs. Teachers understand that instructional plans must be consistently monitored and modified in real time to enhance learning.

***Teachers use a variety of instructional methods.***

Teachers choose the methods and techniques that are most effective in meeting the needs of their students as they strive to eliminate achievement gaps. Teachers employ a wide range of techniques including information and communication technology, learning styles, and differentiated instruction.

***Teachers integrate and utilize technology in their instruction.***

Teachers know when and how to use technology to maximize student learning. Teachers help students use technology to learn content, think critically, solve problems, discern reliability, use information, communicate, innovate, and collaborate.

***Teachers help students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.***

Teachers ensure the development of students' problem-solving and critical reasoning skills by encouraging them to ask questions, think creatively, develop and test innovative ideas, synthesize knowledge and draw conclusions. They help students exercise and communicate sound reasoning; understand connections; make complex choices; and frame, analyze, and solve problems.

***Teachers help students work in teams and develop leadership qualities.***

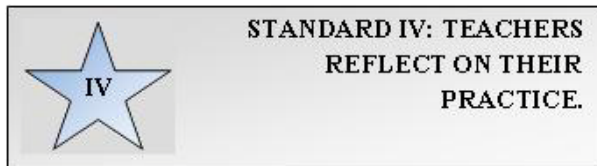
Teachers work with students to create a collaborative learning environment where student voice is valued and students are actively engaged in learning. Teachers organize learning teams in order to help students define roles, strengthen social ties, improve communication, cooperation and collaboration skills, interact with people from different cultures and backgrounds, and develop leadership qualities.

***Teachers communicate effectively.***

Teachers communicate in ways that are clearly understood by their students. They are perceptive listeners and are able to communicate with students in a variety of ways even when language is a barrier. Teachers help students articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively.

***Teachers use a variety of methods to assess what each student has learned.***

Teachers understand and use multiple methods of assessment and data sources, including formative and summative assessments, to document learner progress, and evaluate students' academic growth as they strive to eliminate achievement gaps. Teachers provide opportunities, methods, feedback and tools for students to assess themselves and each other. Teachers use 21<sup>st</sup> century assessment systems to inform instruction and demonstrate evidence of students' 21<sup>st</sup> century knowledge, skills, performance and dispositions.



***Teachers analyze student learning.***

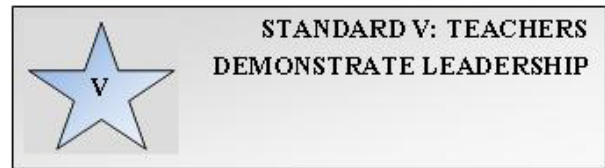
Teachers think systematically and critically about student learning in their classrooms and schools: why learning happens and what can be done to improve achievement. Teachers collect and analyze student performance data using multiple methods of assessment and data sources, in order to continually evaluate their practice, and to improve classroom and school effectiveness.

***Teachers link professional growth to their professional goals.***

Teachers are professionals committed to reflection and growth who participate in continuous, high-quality professional development that includes 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and knowledge; and meets the needs of students and their own professional growth.

***Teachers function effectively in a complex, dynamic environment.***

Understanding that change is constant, teachers actively investigate and consider new ideas that improve teaching and learning. They adapt their practice based on research and data to best meet the needs of their students.



***Teachers lead in their classrooms.***

Teachers demonstrate leadership by taking responsibility for the progress of all students to ensure that they graduate from high school, are globally competitive for work and postsecondary education, and are prepared for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century including democratic participation. Teachers communicate this vision to their students. Using multiple methods of assessment and data sources, they organize, plan and set goals that meet the needs of individual students and the class. Teachers use various types of assessment data during the school year to evaluate and document student progress, and to guide on-going planning and instruction. Teachers are consistent in fostering an environment that promotes mutual respect and allows for maximum student focus on learning, and empowers students to collaborate and become lifelong learners by taking responsibility for their own learning.

***Teachers demonstrate leadership in the school.***

Teachers are professionals who work collaboratively with school personnel to create a professional learning community. They analyze and use local, state, and national data to develop goals and strategies in the school improvement plan that enhances student learning and teacher working conditions. Teachers provide input in determining the school budget and in the selection of professional development that meets the needs of students and their own professional growth. They participate in the hiring process and collaborate with their colleagues to mentor and support teachers to improve the effectiveness of their departments or grade levels.

***Teachers lead the teaching profession.***

Teachers strive to improve the teaching profession by collaborating with colleagues and the school community to promote growth for all educators and enhance the teaching profession. They contribute to the establishment of positive working conditions in their schools. They actively participate in and advocate for decision-making structures in education and government that take advantage of the expertise of teachers.

***Teachers advocate for schools and students.***

Teachers advocate for positive change in policies and practices affecting student learning. They participate in the implementation of initiatives to improve the education of students.

***Teachers demonstrate high ethical standards.***

Teachers are professionals, committed to ethical behavior and principles including honesty, integrity, fair treatment, and respect for others.



***Teachers take responsibility for student growth.***

Teachers pursue high levels of academic growth in academic achievement. They also pursue high levels of student growth in the skills necessary for democratic participation and life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Teachers use evidence to evaluate their practice and continually improve attainment of student growth.